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C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 000727

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [UNHRC](#) [GG](#)
SUBJECT: GEORGIA CONSIDERS NEXT STEPS IN HUMAN RIGHTS
COUNCIL

REF: A. GENEVA 697 (NOTAL)
[B](#). STATE 91894

Classified By: Charge Mark Storella. Reasons: 1.4 (B/D).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY: In an August 27 meeting, Georgian Deputy PermRep Teimuraz Bakradze told us that Tbilisi was considering using the upcoming Human Rights Council session to criticize Russia over recent events in Georgia, although no decision had yet been taken. It remains unclear whether Russia will raise the issue in the session, although it would certainly respond if Georgia were to take the initiative to do so. Bakradze also criticized the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), saying that its office in Tbilisi and sub-office in Sukhumi was not playing an active role. Highlighting the USG position on Georgia and with respect to the Council, we stressed the importance of hearing Georgia's thinking in Geneva. Bakradze said he would welcome USG thinking on how to proceed on statements to the Council. END SUMMARY.

GEORGIA CONSIDERS COUNCIL STATEMENT

[1](#)2. (C) A/DCM began the meeting by laying out the USG position on Georgia, including points in ref b. After thanking the U.S. for its strong support to the GoG, a tired-looking Bakradze said that his government was considering using the Council's 9th regular session, which runs from September 8 to 25, to raise the human rights situation surrounding recent developments in Georgia. Whether Russia intended to do so on its own was unclear, Bakradze said. He had learned from his Azerbaijan counterpart that the Russians had told the Azerbaijan mission here that they were not planning to initiate a discussion of Georgia developments. Bakradze was skeptical, however, noting that Russia had used sessions of the ongoing Conference on Disarmament to criticize Tbilisi. (Most recently, at the CD's August 26 meeting, Georgia and Russia criticized each other.)

[1](#)3. (C) Bakradze noted that if Georgia took the initiative in the Council, Russia would respond sharply; given the tone in the Council, more countries might echo the Russian message than side with Tbilisi. Even if this were the case, however, Bakradze felt that Tbilisi needed to put its position on the record in the Council, since to do otherwise would imply that Georgia was accepting blame for the developments. The Georgian Mission had expressed these views to its Foreign Ministry, he said, adding that Tbilisi had yet to make a decision. The Georgian Mission was not proposing an anti-Russia resolution in the Council, however, said Bakradze, since this would surely be voted down.

[1](#)4. (C) In addition to criticizing Moscow over its actions in Georgia, a GoG statement would likely include reference to the conclusions of a report by the Committee on the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (CERD). The August 2008

CERD Concluding Observations on the country report on Russia contains a range of concerns that Georgia might cite, Bakradze said, including about racist and xenophobic attitudes.

CRITICAL OF HIGH COMMISSIONER'S ROLE

15. (C) The upcoming Council session offered a few occasions when Georgia might raise the issue, were it to choose to do so, Bakradze continued. Interventions following the statement of High Commissioner Pillay offered an appropriate moment, since Pillay might raise the issue in her statement. Bakradze believed that Pillay's statement might echo the only prior OHCHR statement on the Georgian crisis and be limited to urging both sides to respect human rights, rather than placing the blame squarely on Moscow. This would necessitate a Georgian response. If Pillay did not mention the situation in Georgia at all, the Georgian delegation might also feel compelled to raise it at that moment, or to wait for Item 4 discussion (Human Rights Situations).

16. (C) Bakradze added that OHCHR was not playing a constructive role. The OHCHR office in Tbilisi was doing little, and its sub-office in Sukhumi was even less helpful.

17. (C) Bakradze felt that various UN special rapporteurs might be usefully deployed to investigate the recent developments. He said his government might consider urging that Special Rapporteur on Internally Displaced Persons Walter Kalin, SR on Racism Doudou Diene and others be sent to do so. He asked USG views on this approach and welcomed USG support in encouraging SRs to review the Georgia situation

were Tbilisi to take this approach.
STORELLA